

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03 PRS-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2578

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 3595

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR: "SHIRTSEEEVES SESSION" OF SPC ON OPTION III,
JULY 3, 1975

REF: A. USNATO 3494 DTG 281340Z JUN 75;

B. STATE 156820 DTG 030043Z JUL 75

BEGIN SUMMARY. SPC HELD SESSION ON JULY 3 FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF FOUR ASPECTS OF OPTION III: DEFINITION OF AIRCRAFT TO BE REDUCED; DEFINITION OF TANKS TO BE REDUCED; LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET TANKS; AND OTHER EQUIPMENT IN SOVIET TANK ARMY, PARTICULARLY FROGS AND SCUDS. FOR EACH TOPIC, US REP MADE A BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION, FOLLOWED BY QUESTIONS WHICH WERE ANSWERED BY US REP AND/OR US EXPERTS. QUESTIONING WAS LIVELY, BUT GENERALLY FRIENDLY, AND NO ALLY CONVEYED THE IMPRESSION OF DISAGREEMENT WITH THE US POSITION ON ANY MAJOR
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POINT. THE DISCUSSION MIXED POLITICAL AND MILITARY/TECHNICAL CONSIDERATION, AND SERVED AT A MINIMUM TO EDUCATE CERTAIN ALLIED REPS WHO EVIDENTLY HAD NOT READ US VIEWS PAPER CAREFULLY. THERE WILL BE ANOTHER SUCH MEETING THE AFTERNOON OF JULY 8,

CONTINUING ON JULY 9, AT WHICH SOME COUNTRIES WILL HAVE MILITARY EXPERTS FROM CAPITALS. WE HOPE THAT THESE SESSIONS WILL SERVE TO MEET ALLIED CONCERN THAT "STUDY" IS REQUIRED BEFORE SPC CAN TURN TO PARAGRAPHS 4-9 OF US DRAFT GUIDANCE. GUIDANCE REQUESTED IN PARAS 2, 6 AND 7 BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. THE MEETING WAS SCHEDULED AS A MEETING OF THE SPC WITH A LIMITED AGENDA IN A SMALL ROOM, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT EXPERTS WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION. ATTENDANCE WAS HIGH, WITH ONLY PORTUGAL AND ICELAND ABSENT. FRENCH AND TURKISH REPS DID NOT SPEAK. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS FRIENDLY AND INFORMAL. ALMOST ALL THE DISCUSSION TOOK THE FORM OF A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE US ON THE ONE HAND AND OUR ALLIES ON THE OTHER, AND THEREFORE WAS MORE OF A DISCUSSION OF THE REASONS FOR EXISTING US POSITIONS THAN AN EXAMINATION OF PROBLEMS IN DEPTH OR A DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS. WHILE SOME DEBATING POINTS WERE SCORED, NO ALLY APPEARED TO BE ATTEMPTING TO LAY THE BASIS FOR OPPOSITION TO ANY MAJOR US POSITION.

2. DEFINITION OF AIRCRAFT REDUCED. US REP (PEREZ) MADE A BRIEF PRESENTATION SUMMARIZING REASONS WHY US PREFERRED MODELS APPROACH. NETHERLANDS REP (MEESMAN) ASKED WHETHER US ENVISAGED A CEILING ON THOSE NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MODELS REMAINING IN THE NGA AFTER REDUCTIONS, OR ALL US NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MODELS OF AIRCRAFT WHICH MIGHT BE STATIONED IN THE NGA AFTER REDUCTIONS, AND WAS TOLD THAT IT WAS THE LATTER. BELGIAN REP (WILLOT) ASKED ABOUT THE EXTENSION OF SUCH A LIMIT TO ALLIED AIRCRAFT, AND WAS REMINDED THAT THE US DID NOT ENVISAGE SUCH AN EXTENSION. AFTER SOME CONFUSION, IT DEVELOPED THAT WHAT WILLOT AND CANADIAN REP (CDR. BECKETT) REALLY WANTED TO KNOW WAS WHETHER, IF REPEAT IF SUCH LIMITATIONS WERE EXTENDED TO ALLIES, THE MODELS DEFINITION WOULD STILL BE THE BEST APPROACH. US EXPERTS REPLIED THAT THIS MATTER HAD NOT BEEN STUDIED IN DEPTH, BUT THAT MODELS DEFINITION APPEARED APPLICABLE TO ALLIED AIRCRAFT NOW IN NGA AND DRAWBACKS OF ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS CLEARLY APPLIED. MC REP (GROUP CAPTAIN SMITH) SUPPORTED THIS POINT, BUT HINTED DARKLY THAT APPLYING THE MODELS DEFINITION
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TO FOLLOW-ON ALLIED AIRCRAFT MIGHT BE DISADVANTAGEOUS OR DIFFICULT. COMMENT: THIS ISSUE MAY ARISE AGAIN JULY 8 AND 9. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE IF AVAILABLE. END COMMENT. US REP MADE POINT THAT US HAD CONCLUDED THAT EXTENSION OF THIS DEFINITION AS THE BASIS OF A FREEZE ON ALLIED AIRCRAFT WOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH ANY ALLIED PROGRAMS OF WHICH US IS AWARE, AND THIS REMARK WAS GREETED WITH GENERAL SATISFACTION.

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3. FRG REP (COL. DZIALIS) ASKED WHETHER SOVIETS WERE LIKELY TO ACCEPT DISTINCTION BETWEEN NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AND NON-NUCLEAR-CAPABLE F-4S, IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT A NON-NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MODEL COULD BE MADE NUCLEAR-CAPABLE VERY QUICKLY. US REP RESPONDED THAT WHILE ANY AIRCRAFT, WITH SOME MODIFICATIONS, COULD REPEAT COULD BE USED TO DELIVER A NUCLEAR WEAPON, THE SOVIETS PRESUMABLY UNDERSTAND THAT THE DISTINCTION IS REAL IN TERMS OF US PRACTICE. THE SOVIETS HAVE HISTORICALLY NOT REPEAT NOT MADE A FETISH OF VERIFICATION, AND COULD RELY ON OPENNESS OF US SOCIETY TO CONFIRM ACCURACY OF OUR STATEMENTS TO THEM. IN RESPONSE TO COMMENT THAT WHILE NUCLEAR-CAPABLE AIRCRAFT COULD DO THE JOB BETTER, AN F-4F COULD BE USED FOR NUCLEAR DELIVERY, US REP SAID WHILE WE COULD NOT PROVE TO THE SOVIETS THAT A GIVEN AIRCRAFT WAS NOT NUCLEAR-CAPABLE, THE SOVIETS KNEW THE DIFFERENCE. THIS LED TO A CONFUSED DISCUSSION ON THE IMPACT OF THIS DEFINITION ON ERIFICATION. ITALIAN REP (SFARA) FEARED THAT SOVIETS MIGHT DEMAND INTRUSIVE VERIFICATION PROCEDURES; EBLGIAN REP FEARED THAT BY OFFERING A SECRET

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REDUCTION WHICH THE EAST COULD NOT VERIFY BY NTM WE WOULD BE UNDERCUTTING OUR ARGUMENTS THAT VERIFICATION WAS ESSENTIAL, AND THEREFORE DIMINISHING THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR OWN DEMANDS FOR INSPECTION. UK REP (BAILES) OBJECTED ON PRINCIPLE TO DISCUSSING AS COUNTERPARTS SOVIET VERIFICATION OF NUCLEAR REDUCTIONS AND ALLIED VERIFICATION OF SOVIET TANK REDUCTIONS.

4. DEFINITION OF TANKS TO BE REDUCED. AFTER INITIAL PRESENTATION BY US REP, BELGIAN REP ASKED HOW THE US COULD

DECIDE AND DEMONSTRATE TO THE EAST THAT SOME NEW TANK MODEL SHOULD BE COUNTED AS A MAIN BATTLE TANK. US REP INDICATED THAT WE WOULD LOOK FOR SIMILAR CHARACTERISTICS AND CAPABILITIES. NETHERLANDS REP ASSERTED THAT SOME DEFINITION WOULD BE NECESSARY ANYWAY, SINCE NEW MODEL WOULD SURELY DIFFER IN SOME RESPECTS. US EXPERTS CALLED ATTENTION TO IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVING THE TANK'S APPARENT MISSION IN DETERMINING WHETHER IT WAS A MAIN BATTLE TANK. FRG REP SUPPORTED THIS POINT, AND THE CONCEPT OF A DEFINITION IN TERMS OF CAPABILITIES WITH MISSION (TASKING) AS A VALUABLE INDICATOR WAS EVENTUALLY CLARIFIED TO THE SATISFACTION OF ALL BUT NETHERLANDS REP. CANADIAN REP NOTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES BELIEVE THAT THE US APPROACH TO DEFINING TANKS WOULD BE LIKELY TO LEAD TO DIFFICULTIES, BUT THAT THE ALTERNATIVES WOULD BE WORSE.

5. LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET TANKS. US REP MADE BRIEF INITIAL PRESENTATION, IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE AS WHETHER AN EXPLICIT LIMITATION ON SOVIET TANKS WAS NEEDED. CANADIAN REP ASKED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ON US PRIORITIES, INDICATING A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF US PAPER. US REPS CLARIFIED THAT LIMITATION ON US TANKS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE AS COUNTERPART TO LIMIT ON SOVIET NUCLEAR SYSTEMS ANALOGOUS TO THOSE WITHDRAWN BY US, BUT WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AS COUNTERPART TO LIMITATION ON SOVIET TANKS. BELGIAN REP COMMENTED THAT A DIFFICULTY WOULD BE THAT NO SOVIET TANK ARMY NOW CONTAINS 1700 TANKS. UK REP OBSERVED THAT THIS PROBLEM PREDATED OPTION III, AS DID THE PROBLEM OF WHETHER AND HOW TO LIMIT NON-SOVIET WARSAW PACT TANKS.

6. CANADIAN REP ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIET TANK ARMY THE ALLIES ENVISAGED HAS AS MANY AS 1700 TANKS BY THE US MODEL DEFINITION. US EXPERTS REPLIED THAT US LIST OF MODELS WAS
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ILLUSTRATIVE, NOT EXHAUSTIVE. GROUP CAPTAIN SIMITH POINTED OUT THAT MBFR WORKING GROUP IS COMPILING DATA ON PACT TANKS. MISSION BELIEVES THAT ONCE THIS WG DATA IS AVAILABLE, US WILL NEED PROMPT POSITION ON PRECISELY WHICH SOVIET TANKS SHOULD BE ON LIST OF "MAIN BATTLE TANKS".

7. OTHER EQUIPMENT IN THE TANK ARMY, PARTICULARLY FROGS AND SCUDS. ONLY QUESTION WHICH AROSE WAS RAISED BY BELGIAN AND CLARIFIED BY FRG REP. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE US FAVORS REQUIREMENT THAT ALL EQUIPMENT ORGANIC TO THE TANK ARMY BE WITHDRAWN WITH THE TANK ARMY, EVEN THOUGH ANY ELEMENT OF THE TANK ARMY EXCEPT MANPOWER AND TANKS COULD IN THEORY BE RETURNED THE NEXT DAY. FORMULATION IN ANSWER OF REF A, APPROVED IN REF B, APPEARS AMBIGUOUS ON THIS POINT. THIS IS A QUESTION ON WHICH WE DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS A CLEAR US POSITION. ALTHOUGH SPC WAS SATISFIED WITH THE COMMENT THAT WE WOULD "HOPE FOR THE BEST", WE WOULD APPRECIATE GUIDANCE ON THIS POINT.
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